

Message Text

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S/P: J KAHAN
S/S: JETHYDEN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN

S E C R E T STATE 186669

EXDIS LONDON FOR AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PARM, FR, UK, GW

SUBJECT: CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT

REF: LONDON 12668

1. WE APPRECIATE YOUR REPORT ON MULLEY'S VIEWS ON DEFENSE
ISSUES AND, IN PARTICULAR, ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT. WE
ARE CONCERNED THAT MULLEY MAY UNDERESTIMATE USG RESOLVE IN
PURSUING RESTRAINT.

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2. YOU SHOULD DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS WHEN
YOU NEXT SEE MULLEY AND IN CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHER
BRITISH OFFICIALS:
A. OUR CONCERN ABOUT ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT ORIGINATES
WITH THE PRESIDENT. THE PRESIDENT IS FULLY COMMITTED TO
A POLICY OF RESTRAINT AND IT HAS THE HIGHEST PRIORITY IN
THIS ADMINISTRATION. HE BROUGHT IT UP AT LONDON IN MAY,

AND HE PERSONALLY INITIATED THE EXPERTS' MEETING IN BONN IN JUNE. WE HOPE THAT THIS EXERCISE WILL DEVELOP PRODUCTIVELY.

B. WE FEEL THAT PAST US ADMINISTRATIONS OFTEN RESPONDED TO ARMS REQUESTS WITH EMPHASIS ON SHORT-TERM POLITICAL ADVANTAGE AND WITHOUT FULL ACCOUNT OF THE LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES. WE RECOGNIZE THAT IN THE PAST WE HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE WORST OFFENDERS; THE NEW US POLICY IS DESIGNED TO BRING LONG-TERM CONSIDERATIONS TO BEAR MORE CONSISTENTLY ON OUR OWN TRANSFER DECISIONS.

C. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT THE CONSEQUENCES OF ARMS TRANSFER ARE NOT JUST A MATTER OF CONCERN FOR THE US. SECURITY, STABILITY, AND THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES IN THE THIRD WORLD ARE ISSUES THAT AFFECT THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE, AND PARTICULARLY THE ALLIES WHO ARE MAJOR ARMS SUPPLIERS. WE SHOULD BE THINKING OUT THE LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ARMS TRANSFER POLICIES TOGETHER.

D. THE US IS NOT ASKING THE EUROPEAN ALLIES TO REDUCE EXPORTS NOW. NOR ARE WE DENYING THE NEED FOR WESTERN SUPPLIERS TO MEET LEGITIMATE SECURITY INTERESTS IN THE THIRD WORLD.

E. OUR IMMEDIATE CONCERN IS THAT OTHER SUPPLIERS SHOULD NOT BE FILLING GAPS WE HAVE LEFT BY OUR OWN RESTRAINT. THIS WILL EXACERBATE DOMESTIC PRESSURE IN THE US AGAINST RESTRAINT AND COULD LEAD TO MISUNDERSTANDINGS BETWEEN US AND OTHER WESTERN SUPPLIERS.

F. SOVIET USE OF ARMS TRANSFERS TO EXTEND GLOBAL IN-
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FLUENCE IS A MATTER OF COMMON CONCERN TO WESTERN SUPPLIERS. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE SOVIET UNION WILL BE A CENTRAL PROBLEM FOR US IN SEEKING MULTILATERAL RESTRAINT. (WE SHALL BE APPROACHING THEM SOON ON THIS ISSUE.) WHETHER OR NOT WE SUCCEED IN DRAWING THE SOVIETS INTO RESTRAINT ARRANGEMENTS, WE BELIEVE THAT WESTERN SUPPLIERS CAN FULLY COORDINATE POLICIES TO MEET COMMON CONCERNS. MOREOVER, WESTERN COOPERATION ON SUPPLY, AS WELL AS RESTRAINT, WILL BE AN ELEMENT IN DRAWING THE SOVIETS INTO A DIALOGUE ABOUT RESTRAINT.

G. WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT THE FRENCH HAVE A VIGOROUS EXPORT POLICY, BUT WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT GISCARD IS WILLING TO COOPERATE IN EXPLORING OUR COMMON CONCERNS IN THE MATTER, HOLDING OPEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT THERE IS ROOM FOR RESTRAINT.

H. WITH REGARD TO OUR OWN RESTRAINT, RECENT PRESS COVERAGE TENDS TO PORTRAY A SITUATION OF BUSINESS-AS-USUAL. THE FACT IS THAT A NUMBER OF NEGATIVE DECISIONS HAVE BEEN TAKEN, WHICH WE ARE UNDERSTANDABLY RELUCTANT TO ADVERTISE. (IF ASKED FOR SPECIFICS, YOU CAN TELL MULLEY IN CONFIDENCE THAT WE HAVE TURNED DOWN:

-- A-7S FOR PAKISTAN

-- F-18LS FOR IRAN

-- KFIRS AND COMPARABLE US FIGHTERS FOR ECUADOR
-- NUMEROUS OTHER CASES IN AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA,
AND WE HAVE SCALED DOWN THE NUMBERS IN SEVERAL LARGE ORD-
ERS.) MOREOVER, WE WILL SOON PUBLISH A NEW REGULATION RE-
QUIRING PRIOR POLICY APPROVAL FOR SALES PROMOTIONS BY COMM-
ERCIAL FIRMS. WE ARE WORKING TO APPLY OUR POLICY GUIDE-
LINES EAR THE PROCESS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH REQUES-
TOR STATE ORDER TO AVOID INEVITABLE PROBLEMS THAT A-
RISE WHEN A TRANSFER IS DENIED FOLLOWING LENGTHY PRELIMINARY
DISCUSSIONS. IT IS TOO EARLY FOR THE KIND OF BROAD JUDG-
MENTS THAT ARE BEING MADE IN THE PRESS. WE EXPECT THAT IN
A YEAR OR SO THE EFFECTS OF OUR POLICY WILL BE VISIBLE AND
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THE FIGURES SHOULD SHOW A GENERAL DOWNWARD TREND.
I. WHEN WE ENUNCIATED OUR POLICY LAST MAY WE REALIZED
THAT RESTRAINT IN US TRANSFERS WOULD HAVE TO BE GRADUAL PR-
OCESS IF WE WERE TO AVIOD SEVERE REACTIONS DOMESTICALLY
AND INTERNATIONALLY. IT IS ON THIS SAME UNDERSTANDING
THAT WE ARE APPROACHING OTHER WESTERN SUPPLIERS.

3. FOR PARIS AND BONN: YOU SHOULD DRAW ON ABOVE TALK-
ING POINTS WHEN QUERIED BY FRENCH OR GERMAN OFFICIALS ABOUT
US POLICY ON ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT, UNILATERAL OR MULTI-
LATERAL. CHRISTOPHER

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